



Department of Justice

United States Attorney Timothy Q. Purdon
District of North Dakota

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CONTACT: JULIE HOUGH

PHONE: (701) 297-7400

FAX: (701) 297-7425

Wahpeton Man Sentenced on Child Pornography Charges

FARGO - United States Attorney Timothy Q. Purdon announced that on September 23, 2010, **Jonathan Stahl** of Wahpeton, North Dakota, was sentenced before United States District Court Judge Ralph R. Erickson on one count of possession of material involving the sexual exploitation of minors and one count of distribution of materials involving the sexual exploitation of a minor.

Stahl, 26, pleaded guilty on April 19, 2010, to possessing and distributing child pornographic files depicting young boys engaged in sexually explicit conduct to the social networking site Ning.com. In July 2010 the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) informed the U. S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement-Homeland Security Investigations (ICE-HSI) that an Internet Protocol (IP) address originating in Wahpeton, ND, was uploading child pornography. Through further investigation ICE-HSI learned that the Ning.com account and IP address utilized to upload the images of child pornography was assigned to Jonathan Stahl, located at 216 4th Street North, Apartment A, in Wahpeton, ND.

Eventually law enforcement obtained and executed a search warrant at Stahl's residence. A computer which Stahl identified as his own was seized as a result of the

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search. A subsequent forensic examination of the computer revealed 4,441 images and 278 videos depicting children engaged in sexually explicit conduct. In an interview with law enforcement Stahl admitted to viewing child pornography for six years. The defendant indicated that his preference was young boys and admitted to having previously offended against young boys. The charged offenses occurred in 2008 and 2009 in the District of North Dakota.

Judge Erickson sentenced Stahl to 17 years and five months in prison, to be followed by a lifetime of supervised release. Stahl was ordered to pay a \$200 special assessment to the Crime Victim's Fund.

“The child pornographic material possessed and distributed by this defendant is profoundly disturbing,” said Assistant U. S. Attorney Jennifer Klemetsrud Puhl. “It depicts the graphic sexual abuse of boys as young as one year old. The Court’s sentence of 210 months’ incarceration recognizes this extreme depravity depicted in these images and videos and the unique harm this crime inflicts upon children.”

The case was investigated by the U. S. Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement-Homeland Security Investigations.

This case was brought as a part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse. Led by United States Attorneys’ Offices and the Criminal Division’s Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS), Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state, and local resources to better locate, apprehend, and prosecute

individuals who exploit children via the internet, as well as to identify and rescue victims.

For more information about Project Safe Childhood, visit www.projectsafecchildhood.gov.

Assistant United States Attorney Jennifer Klemetsrud Puhl prosecuted the case.

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